SOUTH VIET NAM In Struggle

7th Year — August 13, 1973

No 210

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CENTRAL ORGAN OF THE SOUTH VIET NAM NATIONAL FRONT FOR LIBERATION

A great tension in South Viet Nam

FROM June 15 to 25, 1973 alone, according to still incomplete data, the Saigon administration violated the privisions on ceasefire over 42,000 times, launched over 3,700 land-grabbing operations against areas controlled by the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam, causing great losses in lives and property to local population. In some operations over one division of infantry troops supported by tanks, artillery and aircraft were mobilized, as were the cases in Kontum, Chuong Thien, etc.

In the same period of 45 days, according to still incomplete figures, the Saigon administration launched in areas under its control over 30,000 police operations and jailed tens of thousands of patriots and peace- and freedom-lovers standing for national reconciliation and concord. As a result, in areas controlled by the Saigon administration the people still have to live in a suffocating atmosphere, being deprived of all democratic liberties and having no freedom to move and earn their living, etc.

It is because of the bellicose actions of the Nguyen Van Thieu administration that so far genuine peace has not been restored in South Viet Nam, shooting is still going on, and death and destruction still continue in many places.

With regard to the return of the captured and detained Vietnamese civilian personnel, one of the key provisions of the Agreement, the Nguyen Van Thieu administration is still striving to delay or to evade compliance. Of late, facing the resolute struggle of the Vietnamese people and the strong condemnation of the world's progressive public opinion, it had to take initial steps to return such prisoners; it returned a very small number of detainees but it still illegally keeps hundreds of thousands of patriots. In violation of Article 8 of the Protocol on the return of captured personnel and Article 8 of the Joint Communiqué, which provides that the detaining party must treat the captives and detainees humanely, the fascist Nguyen Van Thieu administration day and night terrorized, repressed, tortured, maltreated and murdered those patriots and peace lovers detained in South Viet Nam. It is also because of the obstinate position of the Nguyen Van Thieu administration that the Agreement on the formation of the National Council of National Reconciliation and Concord composed of three equal segments has not yet been signed within 45 days, as provided for in the Joint Communiqué.

With regard to North Viet Nam, the US has not yet ceased immediately, completely and indefinitely its aerial reconnaissance over the territory of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, as stipulated by Article 1 of the Joint Communiqué.

The United States has cleared up mines in various channels in the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam territorial waters and ports and declared that the mine sweeping "made sure seven North Viet Nam harbors including the key port of Hai Phong were safe of shipping." Yet, it has not fully carried out its obligations to completely clear up the mines that have become ineffective and to supply sufficient means for the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam to sweep mines in its waterways.

With regard to the US-DRVN Joint Economic Commission, the US side resumed the Commission's meetings but it still deliberately delays the signing of what has been agreed upon. In fact, it has not strictly implemented Article 21 of the Agreement and Article 14 of the Joint Communiqué, it has evaded its obligation to contribute to healing the wounds of war and to the postwar reconstruction of North Viet Nam.

Meanwhile in Laos, the United States has encouraged the Vientiane administration to prolong the negotiations between the two Lao parties, that is why the Protocol to the Agreement on Restoring Peace and Achieving National Concord in Laos has so far not been signed. What is particularly serious is that the United States has further increased extermination bombings in Cambodia and continued to extend more military aid to the Phnom Penh puppet regime, thus prolonging the criminal war of aggression against the Cambodian people.

The violations of the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam and the Joint Communiqué by the United States and the Saigon administration has brought about very great tension in South Viet Nam and Indochina and seriously jeopardized peace in this region. This is because the United States is still unwilling to end completely its military involvement and its interference in the internal affairs of South Viet Nam, and still tries to consolidate and strengthen its puppet administrations as instruments for the continued materialization of US neo-colonialism in South Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia.

The Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam sternly condemns and energetically denounces the above-mentioned manoeuvres and actions of the US and the Saigon administration. They must bear full responsibility for all consequences arising from their serious violations of the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam and the June 13, 1973 Joint Communiqué.

The unswerving stand of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam is always to respect and scrupulously implement the provision. of the Paris Agreement and the June 13, 1973 Joint Communiqué and to demand resolutely that the other side do exactly the same.

The Vietnamese people and the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam always respect the independence, sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity and neutrality of Laos and Cambodia, as provided for in Article 20 of the Paris Agreement and Article 8 of the Act of the International Conference on Viet Nam.

They firmly support the just struggle of the Lao people to demand that the United States and the Vientiane administration scrupulously implement the Agreement on Restoring Peace and Achieving National Concord in Laos. They also firmly support the just struggle of the Cambodian people and demand that the United States put an end to its intervention and aggression in Cambodia, first of all stop its bombing of Cambodian territory, and let the Cambodian people settle themselves their internal affairs without foreign interference.

The implementation of the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam and the Joint Communiqué over the past 45 days has proved that the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam is in full conformity with the Vietnamese people's fundamental national rights and the South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination, as well as with the world people's desire for peaces The Paris Agreement has an ever greater effect even on the members of the Saigon army and administration. This force has compelled the United States and the Saigon administration to implement the Paris Agreement step by step, though their basic policy is still to violate and sabotage this Agreement.

... The Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam calls on the government and peoples of the socialist countries, peace and justice-loving countries, and the world's people, including the progressive people in the United States, to continue their strong support of the Vietnamese people's just cause, and resolutely demand that the United States and the Saigon administration scrupulously and fully implement the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam and the June 13, 1973 Joint Communiqué, so as to maintain stable peace in Viet Nam and contribute to the cause of peace in Indochina, Southeast Asia, and the world."

(DRVN Foreign Ministry statement on implementation of Joint Communiqué)

What do returnees say?

Following are statements by political prisoners returned at Loc Ninh airport on July 23. They will provide a better idea of the many-faceted scheme of the Saigon administration in the political prisoner issue—Ed.

Many Buddhist followers and monks are still in jail

"The Saigon administration likes to speak of 'freedom of belief,' 'freedom of opinion' and so forth, yet such empty talk is merely meant to hoodwink the world's peoples and it has actually been pursuing most savage policies and taking arbitrary measures against our Southern fellow-countrymen, especially religious followers. For having exposed the arbitrariness of the Saigon administration as all those who militate for respect for the right and a peaceful and happy life for mankind, I, a nun, was for long denied freedom of speech, detained in a series of jails, atrociously tortured and convicted. No word could picture the penitentiary regime of the Saigon regime's hell on earth. I was arrested in Central Viet Nam, convicted in Da Nang without being allowed to say one word, and quietly thrown into Thu Duc prison where I was very harshly treated.

I know that a number of monks and nuns, members of the Buddhist Institute and Buddhist Students are still languishing in Thu Duc, Tan Hiep and Chi Hoa prisons and others in different detention places..."

(Buddhist nun Dieu Lan)

Return delayed

"After the signing of the Paris Agreement, not only has the Saigon side not scrupulously implemented the provisions on the treatment and return of civilian personnel in its hands, it has also contrived to delay the release of patriots at Con Dao (Poulo Condor), Tan Hiep, Thu Duc and other prisons. The truth is that:

1. Political prisoners have been arbitrarily tried and sentenced or turned into common-law offenders.

At Con Dao the number of these rose to 2,000.

2. Taking advantage of the return, the Saigon authorities has taken a number of political detainees to unknown destinations; typical of all was the May 8, 1973 transfer of 50 of them from Con Dao to Pleiku and Kontum.

3. Persuasion or coercion has been used to make political 'chieu hoi' (1) status and unilaterally release a number of them.

4. Between May 2 and 6, 1973, field police and thugs under the command of Ve, Hoi and Phuc, respectively prison chief, deputy chief and security superintendent attacked the inmates of Camps 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 with rockets, tear-gas, and smoke grenades. They wanted the political prisoners' finger-prints and photographs for the 'chieu hoi' status, (after which they would be classified and taken to other destinations). Seven were killed on the spot and over 500 seriously wounded.

5. Repression and coercion has been stepped up along with confinement in 'tiger cages', 'cow sheds' to prevent demonstrations for prisoners' return and better detention conditions.

6. Out of a total of 9,220 political prisoners at Con Dao to be returned to the PRG, so far only 625 have been released"

(Declaration at Loc Ninh on July 26, 1972 of a group of eight intellectuals including *Nguyen Buu, Thich Thien Kiem, Nguyen Lam, Thich Dieu Lan, prof. Nguyen Trung Tin, Nguyen Xuan Huy)*

Con Dao political prisoners' life in jeopardy

"Instead of handing back political prisoners to the PRG, the Saigon administration is delaying their return, changing their status, mixing them up or transfering from one prison to another. So 50 patriots have been sent to Pleiku and Kontum prisons (2). The situation at Con Dao prison is extremely complex at present; penitentiary authorities have drawn up false lists while secretly disposing of inmates. The life of Con Dao political detainees is more seriously endangered than ever."

(Statement by *Le Van Thanh, Nguyen Trung Tin, Nguyen Xuan Huy, Le Van Nang*, Loc Ninh, July 13, 1973)

Mixing up prisoners

"On July 23, 1972, at 7.00 a.m. the number of female detainees at Thu Duc prison stated by the Saigon authorities to be returned was 194. Nevertheless, the contigent to be set free present at Bien Hoa airport was cut down to 119; 75 others were held back somewhere at the airport or taken nobody knew where. In addition many whose names were not on the list were present. As a result, the operation was fouled up.

More brazenly still, would-be-returnees were forced to study Saigon's 'open-arms policy' and a number of them to denounce the PRG 'brutalities' in the returning place. They all had realized the real nature of the US-Thieu regime, and once released had to say the whole truth about the treatment of prisoners."

(Hoang Thi Khanh, Loc Ninh, July 23, 1973)

Tortured to death

..."The number of patriots dubbed Viet Cong by them (the Saigon authorities) and ruthlessly treated, especially after the coming into effect of the cease-fire, has steadily increased at Con Dao prison. Between May 6 and 15, they tortured to death Phan Ngo, Nguyen Van Tan, Nguyen Kim Cuc, Huynh Chi Ngo and Nguyen Van Soi.

On April 22, 1973, field police brought from Saigon forced the inmates of Wards 6, 7, 8 and 9 of Camp 2 to put their finger-prints on forms and get photographed. They ordered 35 others of the "death cell" to be moved to "special detention" Camp 7. On May 6, almost 300 female prisoners of Wards 6, 7, 8 and 9 of Camp 2 were also shifted to Camp 7. X and Y, the two women leaders of the movement against the US-Thieu regime were kept separately. After nightfall, super-intendent Le Kim Khanh and warder Bach, with weapons in hand, tried to intimidate and rape them."

(Ngo The Ly, *President of the Dalat Buddhist Students' Association* (1971-72), *Deputy Secretary General of the South Viet Nam students' Press Association (1971-1972)*

Marched off to unknown destinations

..."After the signing of the June 13 Joint Communiqué, the Con Dao prison authorities took to unknown destinations many patriots instead of returning them to the PRG. Presently Con Dao prison is overcrowded and medieval torture inflicted day and night"

(*Do Huu Cong*, Native of Vinh Long, July 22, 1973)

"The Saigon administration had made a list of 300 political prisoners held at Tan Hiep jail (Bien Hoa) and scheduled to be handed back to the PRG on July 23, 1973. Among them there were 60 detained in the same ward E with Bui The Van and Nguyen Van Tan. On the release day, only 21 of the 60 were brought to Loc Ninh airport. The rest included Mr Le Si Quy (the well-known writer Thieu Son), Trinh Dinh Ban, Trinh Dinh Xuoc, Nguyen Van Vu, Duong Van Thanh).

Before setting the prisoners free, the Saigon authorities committed such irregularities as mixing them up or taking them to unknown destinations. On July 23 while the roll call took place at 3.00 p.m. at prison, security superintendent Truong Van Day secretely marched off Huynh Tan Mam, Huynh Van Trung, Tran Ngoc Chau, Tran Ngoc Hien and others.

On July 11, prison warder Thong savagely beat detainees in Ward C, kept under 'special detention' and in 'solitary confinement' in ward 11 of Camp 2, took to unknown places seven girl students held in Ward H, and strictly forbade inmates to communicate with one another.

As July 23 approached, Thieu's men stepped up their cruelties and brazenly forced prisoners to sign prepared denunciations of the PRG."

(Excerpt from a letter by *Bui Van The, Nguyen Van Tan* and *Tran Mac Sang*)

The "Chieu hoi" farce

"Provoking disturbances in jails and taking advantage of them to plant their agents among prisoners is a routine trick of the Saigon authorities prior to any return of civilian personnel.

At Loc Ninh airport on July 23, Thieu's men repeated that farce. According to plan, right after landing, several paid agents "asked" permission to remain with the Saigon regime.

How could men and women brutalized for long years in US-Thieu's hell on earth be so physically fit as those thugs? That day the Saigon administration brought to Loc Ninh 558 persons including 12 children under 7. After the plane had touched down 30 fainted and first-aid teams had to be sent for (with the Saigon men looking on indifferently) while the others utterly exhausted could hardly move about. Having experienced US-Thieu horrors, they all wanted to topple the abhorred Saigon regime instead of regretting it. Even prison warders complained aloud that Mr Thieu's penitentiary regime was "savage and horrible."

... Unmasked before the International Commission Team, the thugs shamefully took to flight. All their propaganda gimmick came to a flop. We prisoners resolutely condemn Thieu and company's cruelty and deception.

(*Nguyen Trung Tin*, prison number C.15,477)

"We are fighters for peace, independence and national reconciliation and concord. Because of our striving for those objectives we were jailed by the Republic of Viet Nam government. Instead of releasing us under the terms of the Jan. 27 Paris Agreement and the June 13 Joint Communiqué, and as independent and opposition political activists, the RVN government has returned us to the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam, and forced us to opt for the 'chieu hoi' status if we want to go back to Saigon.

We cannot tolerate such behaviour and once again demand that the RVN government set us free unconditionally.

If that demand is not met and the RVN government persists in turning us over to the PRG of the RSVN, then we shall agree to being released in the PRG-controlled zone. Nevertheless we declare we shall continue to keep our original political convictions to do our bits for peace, independence and national concord."

(Declaration of *twenty intellectuals and students of the Third Force* at Loc Ninh, July 23, 1973)

(1) Chieu hoi: *who crosses to the Saigon side.*
(2) *Full name list was given.*

Land-grabbers beaten off

— Hitting back at Saigon troops intruding into the liberated area of Kontum province, the PLAF, from July 15 to July 25, inflicted over 230 casualties, destroyed 11 tanks and armoured troop carriers, shot down one plane, and took a big haul of weapons and military equipment.

— The PLAF on July 23 intercepted and wiped out the whole of the 525th Security Battalion in Gai Hoa village, Soc Trang province. Many of the infiltrators were taken prisoners.

— In just three days, guerillas of Can Tho province knocked out 160 Saigon land-grabbers along Lai Hieu canal. They also shot down or damaged 3 helicopters.

— On July 20, local liberation units in My Tho foiled a raid by 3 battalions of the Saigon 7th Division, killing or wounding over 100 Saigon troops and capturing many others.

— In Giong Trom district and the capital of Ben Tre province, on July 17 local liberation fighters opened up on two security battalions which were trying to invade various liberated areas there. They killed many cease-fire violators including a deputy battalion commander, wounded many others and shot ablaze two combatcraft.

— Intercepting Saigon raiders in Dien Ban district, Quang Da province, on July 27, liberation fighters took a toll of 150 men dozens of military vehicles and bulldozers.

— Two security battalions mounted an incursion on July 27 into various villages in Tieu Cau district, Tra Vinh province, but were heavily beaten by local liberation forces. One of the raiding battalions was completely put out of action and one helicopter damaged.

Hardly a week before that one Saigon company had been made short work of in the same district.

A tremendous source of joy for the heroic land

(Concluded)

CHAIRMAN Nguyen Huu Tho was impatiently waited for at Cua Viet that day. The defenders of the port were all in a great suspense. They all had closely watched for enemy activity in the sky, at sea and on Cua Viet and been busy decorating the harbour to welcome their cherished leader due to arrive for a visit to this one-time murderous battlefield.

It had known heroic days. Before retreating US-Thieu troops rained thousands of tons of bombs and bullets on this place to wipe out all that was living on the ground. Not a dwelling remained unscathed, not a tree was left standing. Blockhouses, whether on the surface or deep under the earth, had been blown up. The soil has been ploughed again and again, and the portions of walls that were still left standing and half-fallen trees had been maimed by shells or bomb splinters. Steel and concrete and barbed wire lay helter skelter, heaped together. Every where one could see guns put out of commission, burnt tanks, sunk ships and mines of every description.

Finally the aggressors and their hirelings had been driven away. Just those eventually hurled into a desperate counter-attack had also been routed, leaving behind their lorries, armoured carriers and artillery pieces. Cua Viet had been living in peace again for the past several months. Grass had grown up and recovered the road linking it to Quang Tri city. Around the port, thatch houses had appeared each with high on a pole a blue-red flag with a golden star, the flag of the people and armed forces of South Viet Nam who had successfully fought the US invaders in an unequal confrontation.

A brick-paved path ran from the harbour to the heart of the locality. It was here that Chairman Nguyen Huu Tho inspected a detachment of the troops defending the port before coming to the guest house.

This was a small, pretty structure of iron sheets and bars very easy to find here. The furniture was also left behind by the Americans. New were the portraits of President Ho Chi Minh, Chairman Nguyen Huu Tho and President Huynh Tan Phat, and — over there in the yard — a high mast flying a banner of the Provisional Revolutionary Government. All that spelled out that Cua Viet had a new master or that its former master had wrested back his legal right.

That master, the detachment of the People's Liberation Armed Forces in charge of the defence of Cua Viet, had stubbornly hung on to this plot of land, this part of the sky and the sea for over ten years. Since 1968, under the enemy's showers of bombs and shells, PLAF men had sunk or set afire 380 large and small ships. Along the blue, peaceful Cua Viet or out in the foaming sea, one could see carcasses of adverse vessels. And a 100-odd tanks, among them several still brand new were scattered on the white sand of the Cua Viet estuary, looking like a large flock of buffaloes. That was what remained of a mad counter-attack in July 1972, not to mention the graves all along the southward road taken by the enemy panic-stricken forces.

From the watch-tower of the Cua Viet base Lieutnant-colonel Tran Chau, the detachment leader, reported on how the PLAF had dealt with the adverse onset. Chairman Nguyen Huu Tho wanted to know in detail what had happened.

"What was coordination between our three categories of forces like?", he enquired.

"Very fine, Mr Chairman. Guerillas of Trieu Van and regional troops of Trieu Phong proved to be very courageous and closely coordinated with the regulars. This made it possible to check the enemy's thrust."

The commanding officers showed Chairman Nguyen Huu Tho around other sectors of the naval base. He stopped at a point, in front of barbed-wire cages on the way side behind a dilapidated blockhouse, and asked:

"Is it here that they held our people?"

"Mr Chairman, they called these 'tiger cages' They kept in there all of our countrymen they had captured in their sweeps. Rain or shine, the captives had to remain standing in the cages. Many had died..."

Chairman Nguyen Huu Tho took his hat off and stood in silence, everyone followed suit. Then turning to the accompanying party he said:

"The spirit of our fellow-countrymen who died here will live for ever. They made the supreme sacrifice for Cua Viet to live for ever as a heroic port of our fatherland. The Nguyen Van Thieu administration continue to detain hundreds of thousands of our people in jails and concentration camps. We should struggle with added strength to force them to return them to us."

Chairman Nguyen Huu Tho went back to the guest house. The PLAF detachment was present in full strengh at the yard. He stepped forward, acclaimed by a long ovation. He commended the men's combat skill and their gallant defence of Cua Viet, and urged them to remain watchful and be ready to deal with the enemy should they encroach upon the liberated zone.

Chairman Nguyen Huu Tho shook hands with every PLAF man. Walking out of his rank, a young fighter reported to his section leader, and brought in a bag of sea crabs (a hundred or so). He stood at attention and addressed the NFL leader:

"Uncle, yesterday as we heard of your visit, we all wanted to present you with a gift and organized a crab-catching party. We hope you will accept this humble local produce of Cua Viet."

Very moved, Chairman Nguyen Huu Tho squeezed the young PLAF fighter's hand. Turning to the detachment he said:

"Comrades, Liberation troops do the fighting well and the farming well. Take part and help the population in production so as to quickly restore their life to normal."

Chairman Nguyen Huu Tho likes to live and work among the PLAF. He likes to wear their uniform. He addresses them as "comrades" and they call him "Uncle Ba." He is fond of talking with them and always wants to know their thoughts and preoccupations, and gives them fatherly advice. He shares their joys and sorrows. In harsh combat conditions, like a rank and file fighter, he puts up with a knapsack, a hammock and as food, rice with vegetable soup and salt with pepper or sometimes nothing but dehydrated food.

The NFL leader has no special liking for anything except, as they say among his closest aids, for one thing so abundant in South Viet Nam: the Liberation fighters. Indeed, living and working among them gives him special pleasure.

Just before he set out to visit, according to plan, three heroic units of the PLAF of Quang Tri province, he felt unwell. His doctor suggested that he give up the tour. But the "suggestion" was "vetoed."

Three straight rainy days made the road to the PLAF provincial headquarters very difficult. The doctor really worried about the Chairman's condition.

"Perilous ways lead to glory," Nguyen Huu Tho said, smiling. "In old times it occurred that one had to make a genuflexion at each step on one's way to meet heroes. The way we are taking is nothing compared to that."

Chairman Nguyen Huu Tho was delighted to meet and talk with combatants of three units of the three different categories of liberation forces. He enthusiastically cited them:

— Battalion 10 of Quang Tri credited with 73 battles, the wiping out of 5,000 enemy troops, the destruction of 182 vehicles, and the downing of 6 aircraft, was awarded 800 individual and 59 collective medals and cited as a heroic unit in October 1969.

— Company 4 of Gio Linh regional troops, knocked down 1,200 adverse troops and grounded 6 aircraft in 205 fights, received 9 collective medals.

— The guerillas of Hai Phu village, Hai Lang district who, holding their ground, put out of action 1,200 enemy in 259 engagements, helped the population mount 176 political actions and talked 182 Saigon soldiers into crossing over to the people's side, was awarded 92 individual and 29 collective medals.

Chairman Nguyen Huu Tho particularly commended the guerilla force of Hai Phu, which consisted mostly of females.

Recalling a journalist's comment, he said:

"In South Viet Nam in general and in Quang Tri in particular, one runs into heroes as soon as one comes out of one's house."

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The population and armed forces of Quang Tri regarded Chairman Nguyen Huu Tho as a near relative of theirs just back home from a long journey. He himself looked on them as members of his large family. His visit was a tremendous source of joy and inspiration for this partitioned province, where each square metre had received several bombs, where each inhabitant, each street corner and each agglomeration had been credited with brilliant feats, which had written an immortal epic.

Chairman Nguyen Huu Tho visited Trieu Ai, one of the province's heroic villages once notorious for the enemy's Ai Tu base. Here people and combatants had stuck to their land and resisted the aggressors. At Ai Tu, the Chairman pointed to heaps of rusty shells and carcasses of tanks and aircraft and said:

"The reputed alloy of all this hardware is not so hard as the determination of our people here".

"Here in Quang Tri we just look for heroes and see them everywhere," he told the people and cadres at Trieu Ai. "Trieu Ai did well in combat. I hope that its population and armed forces will do equally well in production, in reconstruction and in the present political confrontation."

Doan Thi Mai, the woman president of the People's Revolutionary Committee, Ho Ngan, member of the Committee, and a large number of people went as far as Highway 1 to see Chairman Nguyen Huu Tho and party off. With deep emotion, Ho Ngan hugged Nguyen Huu Tho; he promised to carry out his directives so that Trieu Ai would deserve the attention and care of the National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government.

Before we parted, I asked an old man to tell his impression of what he had seen with his own eyes.

"As you can see for yourself, our Chairman is a far cry from their 'President'", he mused.

THIEN LY

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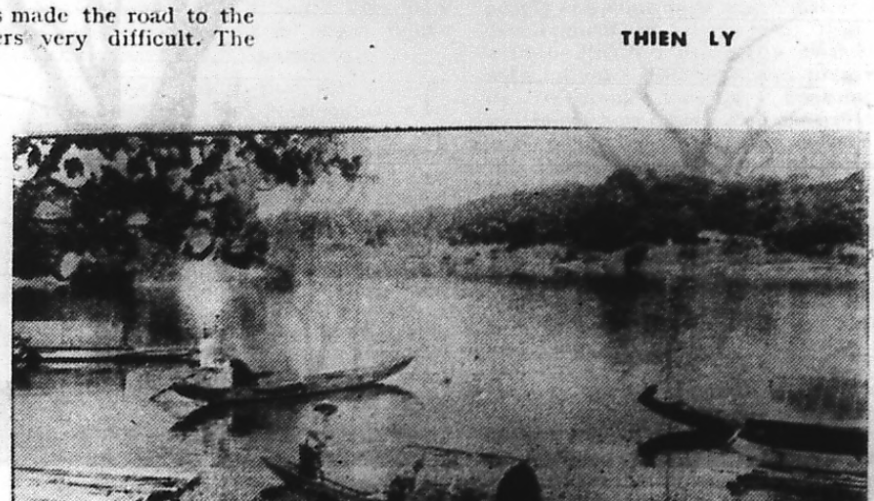


Peaceful morning on Thach Han river

SOUTH VIET NAM LEADERS' MESSAGE OF CONDOLENCES OVER THE DEATH OF CHAIRMAN WALTER ULBRICHT

On August 1st, 1973, Mr WALTER ULBRICHT, Chairman of the Council of State of the German Democratic Republic passed away at his age of 80.

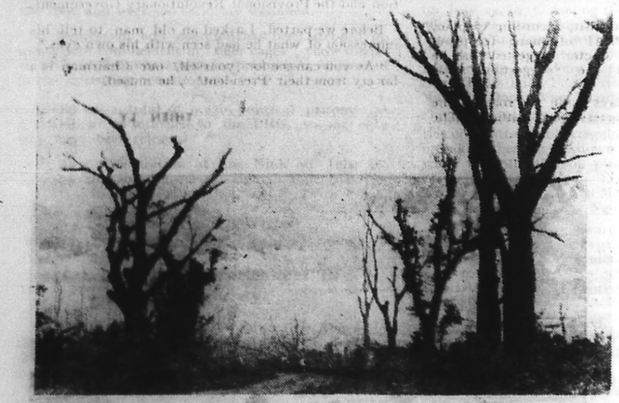
The entire South Vietnamese are deeply grieved at this sad news. On behalf of the National Front for Liberation, the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the RSVN and the South Vietnamese people, Chairman Nguyen Huu Tho of the Presidium of the NFL CC and the Advisory Council of the RSVN PRG, and President Huynh Tan Phat of the PRG of the RSVN sent to the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party, the Council of State, the Council of Ministers, the National Council of the National Front of the GDR, the German people and entire family of Chairman WALTER ULBRICHT their deep condolences.

The message said :

"H.E. WALTER ULBRICHT, Chairman of the Council of State of the German Democratic Republic, an outstanding leader and a prominent revolutionary fighter, devoted all his life to the revolutionary cause of the German people, and to the movement of struggle of the world's peoples against imperialism, old and new colonialism, for peace, independence, democracy and social progress. Chairman WALTER ULBRICHT made a great contribution to the consolidation of the fine solidarity between the people of the German Democratic Republic and the Vietnamese people. Chairman WALTER ULBRICHT's passing away is a great loss to the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, the State and the German people. The South Vietnamese people have lost a great and very close friend."

Thieu's deeds !

The sole bell-tower after a US-Thieu bombing raid on a church



Toxic chemicals ravaged thousands of precious wood trees.

In view of the Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries in Algiers (September 5-8, 1973)

The PRG sole genuine representative of the South Vietnamese

BORN four years ago, the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam has increasingly proved to be the sole genuine representative of the South Vietnamese people. The four years under revolutionary power witnessed a formidable deployment of war methods and means by the Nixon administration for the implementation of the Nixon doctrine. This atrocious war had a clear-cut ultimate objective—do away with the nascent people's revolutionary power. But Nixon's "Vietnamized" war has ended in dismal failure. The US government was forced to sign the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam whereby they had to recognize the Vietnamese people's fundamental national rights and the South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination, and the de facto existence in South Viet Nam of two administrations, two armies, two zones of control and three political forces. This recognition had a double meaning :

— it spelled out the failure of the US-Saigon scheme to crush the people's revolutionary power, and the collapse by big chunks of the US neo-colonialist rule which once dominated the whole of South Viet Nam and now had to make room for the growing revolutionary power.

— it strengthened the juridical foundation of the revolutionary power, or, in other words, asserted the legitimacy of the latter and the RSVN PRG.

This is an undeniable and unobscurable truth. But as a result of their extravagant neo-colonialist ambitions and their obdurate stand of aggressivity and bellicosity, the US government and the Saigon administration have been striving hard to deny the existence of the PRG. They keep asserting that in South Viet Nam there is at present only one "constitutional" and "legitimate" government — i.e. the Nguyen Van Thieu administration.

What is then a legitimate administration ?

Public international law supplies the answer. "It is a government formed in accordance with international juridical principles i.e. with the fundamental national rights and the right to self-determination of the peoples, considered as a whole the cornerstone of contemporary international law. Elections are only a form of expression of popular will, a common but not the only form, otherwise all revolutionary governments would be illegal and consequently so would all revolutions," opined Charles Chaumont, a law professor at the Nancy and Brussels Universities, at the International Conference of Lawyers on Viet Nam meeting at Grenoble from June 6 to 10, 1968 : Other modes of expression of the people's right to self-determination emerge when the force majeure prevents the casting of votes. The conduct and action of the masses is another form, not less valid and probably more eloquent, of popular will. This phenomenon is well-known to international law in times of war whereby the legitimacy of the governments of enemy-occupied countries is preserved or established.

Let us now quote the July 4, 1776 Declaration of Independence of the

United States : "Whenever any form of Government becomes destructive of these Ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its Foundation on such Principles, and organizing its Powers on such Form, as to them seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness."

The Resolution of the UNO 15th General Assembly of December 14, 1960, while formally proclaiming the necessity to rapidly and unconditionally end colonialism in all forms and all manifestations, recognized the legitimacy of liberation movements. The Resolution of the UNO 20th General Assembly of December 20, 1965 also acknowledged : the legitimacy of the struggle that the peoples under colonial domination pursue in realizing their rights to self-determination and to independence and called on all states to give material and moral aid to national liberation movements in colonial territories.

On the other hand, the criteria for the recognition of a new government are : its effectiveness i.e. its real independence and rule over a determined territory and population, and its representativeness, i.e. its democratic foundations.

Ngo Dinh Diem, the head of the first Saigon administration, seized power after a *coup* toppling Bao Dai, the head of the pro-French government. Diem was killed in a *coup*, and following another series of *coups*, Thieu came to power. He eventually ousted his efficient "colleague" Nguyen Cao Ky to concentrate all authorities in his hands. The birth and existence of his government have no juridical foundation whatsoever. Clearly enough, Thieu today is but Diem's successor. His is the same regime shored up by US dollars and weapons. His is the unchanged anti-communist goal, that is a goal directed against the people's patriotic struggle. Daniel Ellsberg, who revealed the Pentagon secret documents, rightly described the present administration in Saigon as a Diem regime without Diem. To say the truth, either with Diem or with Thieu the Saigon administration remains a US-created tool to achieve the US policy of aggression in South Viet Nam — a neo-colonialist regime.

The US and Thieu have been trying hard to put on it a "democratic" and "constitutional" face with a series of faked elections. Nguyen Cao Ky, Thieu's own deputy to the Presidency denounced the Saigon 1971 presidential election as a mere farce. As regards the 1971 presidential election, it was for the whole world a "one-horse race". So even a legal appearance could not be manufactured for the Thieu administration, let alone its legitimate character !

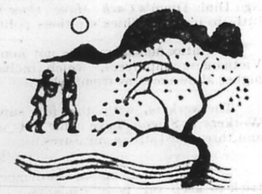
As far as legitimacy is concerned, the Thieu administration's existence and rule does not stand on solid democratic foundations, but on a heap of fascist laws clashing even with the so-called 1967 constitution which is itself utterly anti-democratic ; not on the respect for the supreme interests of the people and on its protection by the people, but on US weapons and dollars. Thieu's so-called Republic of Viet Nam is a new-type colony with the thinnest "independence" veneer of all US new-type colonies, because it is placed under the close control and command of a host of US advisers from top to bottom.

The Saigon administration's finances entirely rely upon US aid. Where then lies its independence ? Can one speak of legitimacy when referring to an administration created by, existing and working for, and with the backing of, imperialism, like the Thieu administration ?

Who does the Thieu administration represent—the answer to this question is self-evident. Everyone knows that peace is a deep aspiration of the whole people. To fight for peace is consequently the duty of all patriotic Vietnamese. This is also a gauge of the popular character of an administration. While the PRG consistent policy is to strictly respect and implement the Paris Agreement and June 13 Joint Communiqué, these two instruments have seriously and systematically been violated by the Nguyen Van Thieu administration. Land-grabbing operations, police and pacification actions can be counted not by the thousands, but by the tens of thousands. Tens of thousands of innocent people are still detained and tortured in prisons and concentration camps, and add up to the more than 200,000 people whose return stipulated by the Paris Agreement has not been done after they had been jailed for dozens of years on account of their patriotism, love for peace or militating for freedom and democracy. All democratic liberties are more brazenly suppressed than ever in the Saigon-controlled areas. The Consultative Conference of the two South Vietnamese parties to solve internal problems of South Viet Nam in a spirit of national reconciliation and concord has been obstructed by the Saigon administration. All these facts show that the latter has been exerting itself to challenge the nation's supreme interests, thwart the people's deepest aspirations, persist in acting as a tool of US imperialism for maintaining US neo-colonialism in South Viet Nam. It has been putting into effect US schemes to wreck independence, peace, democratic freedoms and national concord in South Viet Nam.

Can the enemy of the people and of independence, freedom and peace be a legitimate government ?

Who does the Saigon administration represent—the answer to this question is clear enough. It represents nobody. It represents the interests of no social section, no class—only those of the US imperialist aggressors. It is seeking to preserve in South Viet Nam a dictatorial regime with fascist laws, terror and murder. For its part, the PRG, born of the high tide of patriotic struggle, upholds the South Vietnamese people's fundamental national rights recognized by the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Viet Nam. It was born at a time when in many localities self-managing committees had been set up by the people following the crumbling of the grass-roots structure of the Saigon administration, and when the National Front for Liberation, the organizer and leader of the South Vietnamese people in all their victories, had established its main structure of administration and had won the recognition of many states and international organizations. The PRG was voted into power by representa-



tives of various social segments at the Congress of the South Vietnamese People's Representatives of June 6, 1969. It includes personalities of renown, genuine representatives of all walks of life, political and religious bodies and nationalities in South Viet Nam.

The PRG writ runs extensively. The People's Liberation Armed Forces under it, and the people's security forces, are controlling vast liberated areas and extending their activity to areas still under the Thieu administration. The PRG is possessed of a totally independent and sovereign policy not only in the anti-US patriotic resistance, but also in negotiations for the settlement of South Vietnam's problems, in international relations, in rehabilitation, reconstruction and restoration of the people's life to normal.

The PRG is fully entitled to the honour of being sole genuine representative of the South Vietnamese people not only because it includes representatives of broad masses of the people, but also because it defend the Vietnamese people's supreme interests, fundamental national rights and right to self-determination Though general elections throughout South Viet Nam have not been held owing to war circumstances, the PRG has organized elections from province to village levels in which the people chose by secret ballot their revolutionary committees.

The status of the PRG as legitimate representative of the people is also shown in its international credit : it is recognized by 34 States with which it has established diplomatic relations, and recently 16 ambassadors presented their credentials, not including the Ambassador for Cuba, Raul Valdes Vivo, who was accredited in 1969. Its admission to the Georgetown Conference of Non-Aligned Countries as a full member has provided a solid juridical basis for its legal representativeness. Moreover it was one of the parties to the negotiations with the US government for the last five years, one of the signatories to the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam, one of the 12 members of the International Conference on Viet Nam and one of the 12 signatories to the Act of that Conference. More recently, the PRG was one of the four signatories to the Paris June 13, 1973 Joint Communiqué. All this asserts its status as legitimate representative of the South Vietnamese people and establishes the fact that at the present juncture it has a say in all problems of South Viet Nam. Its legitimacy is incontestable. The PRG is an undeniable reality. No political settlement in South Viet Nam is now possible if its legal representativeness is not recognized.

The PRG holds that the issue of power in South Viet Nam can now be settled only if one proceeds from the evident consideration that there exist two administrations, two armies, two zones of control and three political forces, and if a National Council of National Reconciliation and Concord with three equal segments is to be set up to organize genuinely free and democratic general elections for a Constituent Assembly, to elaborate a Constitution and appoint a full-fledged Government for South Viet Nam. This is the most realistic, most reasonable and sensible way of solving the South Viet Nam issue.

To deny the legitimacy and try to ignore the PRG is to reject the basis for solving the problem of power in South Viet Nam. It is a brazen challenge to the people and liberation armed forces of South Viet Nam, and to international law. It is also a serious threat to the implementation of the Paris Agreement, the Act of the International Conference and the June 13, 1973 Joint Communiqué on Viet Nam.

For all its atrocious "Vietnamized" war and the loss of innumerable US and Saigon troops and bombs and shells of all sizes, the US administration was unable to destroy the PRG and the system of people's revolutionary power ; all schemes and manoeuvres to deny its existence and legitimacy are likewise wild dreams.

There can be no alteration to this truth : the PRG is a legitimate government and the sole genuine representative of the South Vietnamese people, it has heroically fought for the South Vietnamese people's genuine right to self-determination, it is the symbol of their bright future, therefore it has been enlisting increasing support, aid, and recognition from peoples and governments of other countries. In the present situation, in the context of the existence of two administrations, two armies, two zones of control in South Viet Nam, recognized by the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam, there has been a growing realization among freedom-, peace- and justice-loving peoples and governments all over the world that increased support and assistance to the South Vietnamese people and continued consolidation and development of diplomatic relations with the RSVN PRG, mean association with national liberation and progress ; by so doing they are backing a legitimate government and contributing in a concrete way to the defence of the Paris Agreement and of peace in Viet Nam, Indochina and the world.

The South Vietnamese people are convinced that with this awareness the world's peoples and governments will continue to grant the South Vietnamese people and the PRG, their sole genuine representative, greater and more efficient support and assistance in the fight for a strict implementation of the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam, for the defence of stable and durable peace and for the achievement of independence, democratic liberties and national concord in South Viet Nam.

TVA:

a guillotine for the people and a poison for Thieu

IN early July, while the labouring people were already overwhelmed by the soaring cost of living and skyrocketing taxes of all kinds, a new imposition was decreed: TVA (Taxe sur la Valeur Ajoutée) or tax on added value.

The Head of the General Department of Justice regards paying TVA as law abiding and calls on every one to fulfil this "legal" obligation. A Chinese, owner of a bar, dubbed it **Thue Toi Va** or "Misfortune Tax" and the public "guillotine tax."

What is the new tax like? According to the Saigon paper *Dien Tin* of June 28, it consists of two parts: first, it takes an amount equivalent to 10 per cent of the cost price of the commodity; second, it takes 10% of the commission each time the commodity changes hands (added value) until it reaches the consumer. It is very difficult indeed to work out the final "added value" of an item of goods. The Saigon administration does not however worry about that. What matters to them is the tax and the tax alone. Like quack ruthlessly squeezing his patient, the Saigon authorities are playing the "I don't care whether you live or die, what I am interested in is line my pockets" trick on the tax payers. In feathering their nests, Thieu and his confederates do not spare any branch of activity, any social section, any individual, not even teachers and school children doctors and nurses and the sick.

Those who know the living conditions in Saigon and the other places under Saigon control, cannot but feel concerned over the lot of the labouring people there, especially the civil servants and the soldiers with fixed salaries, and wonder how, with all the existing difficulties in making both ends meet, they could bear the burden of TVA.

Dien Tin of July 15 gave the following "budget" of a functionary with wife and three children:

Income: monthly salary plus various allowances:

15,500 piastres.

Outlay: Monthly expenditure on rice and other food items: 20,000 piastres.

school fees...: 4,000 piastres.

Thus the monthly deficit amounts to at least 10,000 piastres — at least because it does not include many "out" items: bus fares, haircutting, medicines, clothing, extraordinary outlay.

Dien tin concluded: "That is an ideal budget for any family which hopes to have enough to eat and live without nourishing foods and without illness. What do the social medicinemen think now that the price of a bag of rice has shot up to 12 or 13,000 piastres while salaries are frozen?"

Saigon papers reported that during the last two weeks of June and in early July, necessities in cities like in Da Nang and Hue went up by from 10 to 30 per cent over May. This accounts for the fact that in Saigon 60 to 70 per cent of workers' and labouring people's families do not have enough to eat and have to live from hand to mouth; their children can no longer afford schooling. Unemployment has taken on larger proportions among workers as a result of factory and workshop close-downs, production slump, reduced work hours, lay-offs, etc. In Saigon, there is one workers' jobless family in four. Unemployment is the most serious among dockers, taxi and pedicab drivers.

Instituted in such a context, TVA has cast a gloom in Saigon-controlled zone. "Throughout Saigon," *Dien Tin* of June 30 wrote "wherever you go, you can hear complaints from both sellers and buyers, and more particularly from the military and the civil servants so far regarded as the two most underprivileged groups."

Just one month after it came into effect, TVA has shown what a "guillotine" it is. "Since the tax on added value was imposed," *Cong Luan* (July 14) reported, "prices have shot up dramatically, it happens that a commodity costs 100 piastres in the morning and 150 in the afternoon." Senator Ha The Duyet complained: "The tax on added value has landed the consumers in a most difficult situation, for prices rocket so rapidly that one has the impression that their spiralling can never be slowed down." The senator said that Western medicines' price hike was 100 per cent, and that a medicament he himself had bought before July 1 for 220 piastres now cost 445, and is sold at 490 including the tax 45, on added value.

By mid-July, that is two weeks after TVA was enforced, popular feeling was running high all over Saigon and kept rising ever since. Anti-TVA drives are underway. According to *Cong Luan* of July 15, during an interview between Nguyen Hai Binh, Director General of the Tax Department and Saigon petty women vendors, one of these burst into tears and threatened suicide in protest. Here and there businesses have been restricted and licences returned to the administration. *Dien Tin* reported that "Business is at a standstill, for everyone is fed up with price rises and no one has the heart to go about his business," and that "disguised unemployment" as the economists have put it has become a reality."

In a petition to the Saigon authorities, the city's Physicians' Union pointed out that the 10 per cent TVA that the administration forces the physicians to levy on their patients is a "misfortune" for the sick who have to pay for medicare. The petition recalled that "no law has up until now imposed taxes upon the medical profession and care for the sick. The medical profession is not some activity like trade. No one wants to be ill; illness is mishap, fending money to pay for medical treatment is another mishap. Tax on medical attention is a greater misfortune." The petition urged that if the administration could not provide material help and medicare to the sick as they ought to for the sake of the health and welfare of the people, they should not interfere with their treatment.

At a press conference in Saigon a woman writer suggested, "Let's put our books into baskets and try to peddle them around to dodge TVA." Reporting on this, *Cong Luan* (July 9) had a dig at the establishment: "As regards TVA, the State will win, the writers will lose!" In the same vein, *Phuong Dong* (July 14) commented: "In Saigon coffin sellers mark up 10 per cent on the price of their ware. Is it because of the new tax? Anyhow the dead pay TVA only once and the sick many times..."

Why this fresh ruthless extortion from the people?

It is obvious to all that the "guillotine tax" is a by-product of Nixon's "Vietnamization of war" policy, of the economic and financial crisis plaguing the Saigon regime. Saigon's economic and financial difficulties have been seriously aggravated in recent years by US troop withdrawal and the hostility of the US Congress to aid to Thieu. As is known, Thieu's 1973-1974 draft budget runs as high as 400 billion piastres and the deficit might reach 155 billion or more than the whole budget for 1969, the first year of Vietnamization. How can Thieu fill the gap?

According to *Cong Luan* (June 9) the 1973-1974 budget consists of 30 per cent of aid, 30 per cent of inflation banknotes and 40 per cent of taxes. In fact, American aid having met strong congressional opposition, Thieu has no other alternative than to collect more drastic taxes. *Cong Luan* reports on June 27, "the revenue from taxes expected by the government for 1973 is twice that of 1972." *Dien Tin* said that out of the annual 900 billion piastres outlay, the Ministry of Finances estimates that it will gather 90 billion piastres as taxes in the last six months of the current year.

TVA's importance is clear enough for an administration whose economy and finances are not based on production. It is equally understandable why the Saigon authorities refuse positively to comply with the request that the educational and medical branches be exempted from taxes on grounds that "the TVA law does not allow to do so."

Saigon public opinion holds that by instituting the "misfortune" tax Thieu drinks poison to quench his thirst. Thieu may know that but he has no other course of action left.

HOANG TUAN

in the cities

— Life has become harder and harder for the 300,000 civil servants in Saigon, whose salaries remain almost static while prices keep soaring.

Many petitions, therefore, have been sent to the Saigon administration for rises to help them deal the skyrocketing living cost.

300 motor-cyclocab drivers in Saigon recently launched a one-day strike against the groundless seizure of vehicles and heavy fines. The action seriously affected the life in the city whose authorities had to promise the release of all apprehended vehicles and to consider other claims of the strikers.

— According to the paper *Song Than* (Tidal Wave), *Dan Chu*—organ of Thieu's political party — has failed the reader utterly. It is not modern in any way but is as "backward" as "antediluvian" as any other Saigon papers and, like Ngo Dinh Diem's *Cach Mang Quoc Gia* (Nationalist Revolution) can do very little to improve Thieu's pitious political image.

— Caltex managers have not honored any of the agreements concluded with Vietnamese employees, which include a 16.5 percent basic wage increase and higher allowances as from Feb. 1.

The workers, with the full support of the Union of Gas and Chemical Workers in Saigon, have come out very strongly against this breach of faith, and threatened strong measures.

— Parents in Long An province have denounced high school fees as a trick to keep off poor students.

They are demanding the abolition of the decision to dismiss any elementary school pupil who cannot pay his fees regularly and promptly.

— All the Vietnamese employees at the Pacific construction firm have signed a petition against the arbitrary lay-off of 16 workers, and for their immediate reinstatement and fair treatment in general.

— As a result of Thieu's economic measure, unemployment in Saigon has increased alongside worsening depression. Many more smallshops have been closed down, and poverty-stricken parents, unable to afford schooling for their children, have had to find jobs for them.

— A deputation of industrialists, importers, exporters, plantation owners, agricultural producers and writers went to the Economic-Financial Joint Committee in Saigon on the afternoon of July 18 to press for the abolition of TVA, a kind of additional tax which is too much for them to pay, what with the many other absurd taxes already imposed on them.

The DRVN in construction

Na Hoa pine-apple (Lang Son)

Na Hoa is the habitat of pine-apple. Compared with that grown in well-known exporting countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, Na Hoa variety has a fragrance and sweetness which make it a good export line.

A pine-apple state farm was set up at Na Hoa at the end of 1969. In 1971, the Huu Lung region alone harvested for the first time over 100 tons of fruit. In 1972, the Na Hoa farm delivered over 200 tons to the local fruit-processing factory.

From 1973 onward, this farm has gone in for large scale production by expanding the cultivated area and raising productivity up to the level of major producing countries. It is expected that towards 1978, the Na Hoa farm will be able to farm thousands of hectares with a yield of 20 tons per hectare. It has just successfully experienced a kind of out-of-season pine-apple.

The pine-apple tree grown at Na Hoa bears a large quantity of fruits of big size each weighing from 0.6—0.8 kilogram, to 2 kgs. Na Hoa farm also grows a Loc Binh species whose fruit weighs up to 3.5 kilogram each.

In the near future, many factories will be built at Na Hoa to make pine-apple preserves, liqueur and soft drinks, and process pine apple leaves into fibre and paper.

Jute and its utility

In our country jute is an important industrial crop which has a high economic value and can find a world-wide outlet.

With its fibre and bark one can produce a wide range of goods such as bags, charcoal textiles, electric wire coating, ropes, hammocks ; its stem is turned into paper pulp, plywood and active charcoal. Its seeds gives a kind of oil used in medicine.

Our country which has a tropical wet climate and is swept by the monsoon wind is the habitat of jute.

After the resistance war against French colonialism, the growing of jute in North Viet Nam has been constantly developed. Compared with 1939, the acreage under jute in the North in 1970 was 23 times over, productivity more than twice over, and the yield 52 times over, productivity more than twice over, and the yield 52 times over.

In such provinces as Hai Hung, Thai Binh and in the Hanoi area, the jute cropping land covers 27-38% and even 50-60% of farmland.

In the immense jute fields of Hai Hung and Thai Binh, the economic value of jute is much higher than other crops. The output value of one hectare under jute is 1.5—2 times that of rice, 2.5—3 times that of maize, 2 — 2.5 times that of cotton and groun dnut, 5—6 times that of sesame, and 4—5 times that of soya bean. Thus jute has an yield definitely superior to that of many other crops and demands for it is increasing in industry and export.

Vietnamese rubber

Before the August 1945 Revolution, the French colonialists held that rubber could not be grown in the North and they devoted their efforts to planting its only in the South.

After liberation, a number of rubber plantations have been set up under the DRVN Government.

Virgin land in the province of Lang Son, Phu Tho, Thanh Hoa, Nghe An, Quang Binh and in the Vinh Linh area has been turned into green rubber plantations. Rubber trees bear fruit particularly in summer. Rubber is a great staple product.

The "Yellow Star" Rubber factory has established that the rubber grown in the North is of good quality, can be used for the manufacture of all kinds of articles which can stand comparison with any foreign counterparts.

From spilled rubber seeds, can be extracted 25—30 % of oil used for the manufacture of soap and recently successfully experimented a high grade ingredient in the painting industry. After extraction, the rubber seeds give a substantial quantity of oil cakes rich in nutritive value which after neutralizing poison, are used as good food for animals.

A hectare of rubber trees can give 1.200 kilograms of dried latex, equivalent in value to 11 hectares of ricefield, let alone the oil and oil cakes referred to above.

Restoration and building

The two air and naval wars waged by the US imperialists against the North destroyed millions of square metres of housing, hundreds of warehouses, railway stations, bridges and culverts.

In the past six months, North Viet Nam has built 390,000 sq. m. of temporary housing space and 60,000 sq. m. of permanent dwellings and repaired half a million square metres of housing destroyed by American bombs and shells.

Hanoi, Hai phong, Nam Ha, Quang Ninh, Thanh Hoa, Bac Thai, Lao Cai, etc. have built one- to five-storey prefab houses in designs suitable to local conditions.

They all possess builders' teams specialized in the construction of houses, schools, hospitals... Hanoi has completed the reparation of 5,000 brick houses damaged by bombs, totalling nearly 200,000 sq.m. of floor space, and built new brick and thatched houses in the bombed areas totalling 50,000 sq.m. A dozen 4-storey houses are now being built with a floor space exceeding 210,000 sq.m. In Hanoi twenty 4—5-storey buildings are under construction. After completion, they will supply 35,000 sq.m. of accommodation to the inhabitants (now 13,000 sq.m. have been occupied by tenants).

The Transport and Communications Department has built and repaired over 30 rail and road bridges totalling 4,000 metres in length, 35,000 square metres of storehouses, 17,000 sq.m. of goods storing compounds, 4,250 sq.m. of railway stations, 42,000 sq.m. of floor for work sites and nearly 170,000 sq.m. of houses, eating houses and kindergartens.

North Viet Nam intellectuals urge immediate return of political prisoners in South Viet Nam

On July 22, 1973, the South Viet Nam Committee of Struggle for the Freedom of Patriotic and Peace-loving People Detained by Saigon administration launched an urgent appeal to the people throughout the country. The appeal said :

"In discharge of our responsibility to the nation, and our obligation to our brothers and sisters still in detention, let us resolutely check the bloody hands of the Nguyen Van Thieu administration and force it to give the prisoners a decent treatment as provided for by the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam, and demand that the United States and the Saigon administration return immediately and unconditionally all the people arrested and detained by them."

On the evening of July 23, in Hanoi, the Action Committee of Intellectuals Against Saigon Terror and For US-Saigon Strict and Full Implementation of the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam, the Viet Nam Writers' and Artist' Union, the Writers' Union, the Association of Medical Workers, the Lawyers' Association, the Journalists' Association and the Students' Union held a big rally in response to the July 22 appeal of the South Viet Nam Committee of Struggle.

The meeting was attended by nearly 1,000 intellectuals including university professors, doctors, pharmacists, scientific researchers, lawyers, writers and journalists representing tens of thousands of intellectuals in Hanoi and various offices and services from all parts of Viet Nam.

The speakers voiced the indignation of the intellectuals and the entire people of Viet Nam at the Nguyen Van Thieu administration's continued detention and torturing with US support, of hundreds of thousands of patriots and peace partisans in defiance of all norms of morality and law and the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam and ist Protocol on the return of captured personnel.

The gathering passed a resolution which urged that the Saigon administration:

— return immediately all captured civilian personnel, return all political prisoners, respect their political opinions and their desire to return to their families in whatever zone of their choice and to guarantee their safety and freedom after their return.

— give up immediately all schemes and acts to dodge the return of political prisoners such as faking files to turn political prisoners into common law prisoners, forcing them to sign "turncoat" applications, extending the terms of those who have served their time, taking them to unknown destinations...

— abolish immediately all fascist laws and regulations and treat the detainees in accordance with humanitarian principles and international practice as provided for by the Paris Agreement and the Protocol on the return of detained personnel.

★ ★ ★

Here and There

A Police State

For the financial year 1973-1974, 15,2 million dollars have been earmarked for the strengthening of Thieu's police and prison network, namely for : maintenance of 284 US advisers, training of 200 police in handling electronic devices, purchase of spare parts for the Saigon police's tele-communication system, training of 64 police heads, more complete facilities for police to back the prison machinery...

Senator E. Kennedy has estimated that the sum far exceeds US aid to Thieu.

It also indicates that Nixon is making an effort to intensify the brutalities against patriots and Thieu's opponents with a view to wrecking the Paris Agreement and preserving US neo-colonialist rule in South Viet Nam.

But the credits are recorded under the heading : "aid for post-war reconstruction of Indochina!"

The *Toi Va* Tax (TVA)

Thieu's recently instituted tax on added values (TVA) has been dubbed by the Saigonese Toi Va (Misfortune) Tax.

A reader's letter to the paper *Dai Dan Toc* (Great Nation) related on July 27, 1973 his futile and tragic last-ditch attempt to save his dying wife by trying a pawn shop (where he wanted to hock a bracelet of his wife, the doctor), the pharmacist, the coffin dealer and the undertaker. Everywhere he was asked to pay the 10% TVA which he could not afford. At the end of his tether, he could but burst out into violent language and ask four porter neighbours to help him bury his dead without charge.

The *But Thep* (Steel Pen) reported on July 24 that the teaching body had sounded the alarm : the school population had decreased by half and in July the teachers received no salary.

A Nice Thing to Be Remembered by

The GI's have left in the Saigon-ruled zone a very nice thing to be remembered by : a contingent of some 100,000 drug-addicts consuming a monthly 2 tons of narcotics. Thieu's official news agency, has let it be known that young people from 16 to 25 continue to swell the ranks of this army and that heroin and morphine are their favourite drugs.

It must be pointed out that the figure is supplied by an "official source," therefore not to be taken at its face value and that the army of drug-dealers in South Viet Nam is commanded by the "First Lady".

Thieu has been moving heaven and earth to fill the deficits of his budget. His trip to the US and "friendly countries" to beg for aid and subsidies had produced more promises and opprobium than dollars. Tax hikes and imposition of all conceivable new taxes including the TVA have met with the stiff resistance of the tax payers. The granting of the oil prospecting and exploiting rights alone has earned him from US, Canadian and Japanese firms a handsome sum of 16,600,000 dollars, which made "his eyes glow and his mouth grin" *(Dai Dan Toc)*. But that was clearly not sufficient. There is still the recourse to gambling dens and brothels. Gone is the good old time of the presence of half a million US troops who gave Saigon a billion dollar income from "six trades" (catering clothing, transport, housing, entertainment and amusements). Estimates put prospective profits deriving from gambling and prostitution at half a million *dong* a day. The *Dien Tin* (Dispatch) announced on July 26 that "the Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Planning and Ministry of Finance have laid down the regulations for the bidding for, and the status of the International District of Entertainment, where will be available all sorts of games from fan tan to roulette..."

HUONG NAM

At the 10th World Youth and Students Festiva

Viet Nam, *focus of solidarity*

THE 10th World Youth and Students Festival opened on the afternoon of July 28, 1973.

The sky over Berlin, capital of the German Democratic Republic, was full of white doves. The *World Youth* stadium became a forest of flags and flowers of all colours. Ten torches were lit up, as symbols of the past ten World Youth and Students Festivals. Berlin became the rendez-vous of nearly 20,000 representatives of the youths and students of 140 countries and more than 100,000 young men and women from free Germany who gathered there under the *For anti-imperialist Solidarity, For Peace and Friendship* slogan.

Leading the parade into the stadium, the youth and students delegations of the Republic of South Viet Nam and the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam were given a rousing welcome with firecrackers, and tumultuous waving of flags and flowers. The slogans: *Peace, Solidarity, Friendship* and *The World Youth fully Support the Just Struggle of the Vietnamese People and Contribute to the Reconstruction of Viet Nam* resounded all over the area.

Flags of the Republic of South Viet Nam and of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam were paraded by the delegations of many countries. Big portraits of President Ho Chi Minh and quotations from his last Message were held high by the Italian youth and students delegation. The Venezuelan delegation chanted aloud, *Ho, Ho, Ho Chi Minh* while marching under a big banner inscribed with the slogan: *Long Live Viet Nam*! The delegation of the German Democratic Republic carried a streamer with this inscription: *Unite to Win. 105,000 marks for Viet Nam.*

Unity with the peoples and youths of Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia now is more opportune than ever

That was the watchword for the first day of the Festival, July 29, 1973.

That day, the Standing Committee of the Festival inaugurated the Centre of Solidarity. Minister Nguyen Van Hieu, Head of the delegation of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the RSVN in Paris, also attended the Festival and was elected Honorary President of the Centre of Solidarity.

The *Unity with the Peoples of Viet Nam and the Indochinese Countries* cross-country race and the pictorial exhibition on the solidarity of the world youth with the peoples of Indochina and all the other nations struggling for national independence and genuine peace drew the enthusiastic cooperation and presence of youths from all countries and commanded the keen attention of the participants in the Festival.

The day of solidarity staged under the *Unity with the peoples and youths of Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia is now more opportune than ever* slogan wound up with a big rally attended by close to 10,000 participants in the Festival. There, Gunther Jahn, Head of the youth and students delegation of the GDR said:

"A Vietnamese proverb said:

A tree cannot make a hill,
But three trees will make a high mountain

So, let us link our arms and side with the peoples and youths of Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia, those who have been setting a bright example of indomitableness against the imperialist aggressors, for national independence, and freedom."

The human sea burst into stormy applause when Heroine Ta Thi Kieu expressed, on behalf of all the youth and students of Viet Nam, heartfelt thanks for the warm feelings shown by the youths in all lands to the people and youth of Viet Nam.

Speaking on the same occasion, R. Chandra, General Secretary of the World Peace Council, said: From now on, there exists in the dictionaries of the human race, of whatever nation and nationality, a new and great word. This word is synonymous with courage and staunchness. It is synonymous with the certainty of victory of a small nation in its confrontation with the strongest and richest imperialist power in the world. This word is also synonymous with extraordinary optimism and self-confidence. This word is actually *Viet Nam, Viet Nam.*

The head delegates of Laos, the Soviet Union, Cuba, France, Chile, Japan, Guinea (Bissau), Palestine, and other countries took turns in voicing the solidarity of the youth in their countries with the legitimate effort of the peoples of the Indochinese countries and reaffirmed that it is now more necessary than ever.

"We'll win together"

Simultaneously with diversified tokens of friendship, very warm meetings and contacts took place between the two Vietnamese delegations and others to the Festival, in an atmosphere of close militant solidarity and fraternal friendship. At the meeting with the youth and students delegation of the GDR, the German hosts were deeply moved when hearing their Vietnamese friends sing in German the song *The Spanish Sky*, a song of the militants in the International Brigade named after Thaelmann. Flags of friendship and other gifts were exchanged between the Vietnamese and GDR delegations.

At the one between the Vietnamese and American delegations, Miss Angela Davis, Head of the US delegation, warmly kissed Vo Thi Lien, a young Vietnamese girl and only survivor of the Son My (My Lai) massacre, saying: American progressives always feel that a very heavy responsibility rests with them in the struggle to preserve peace in Viet Nam. For this reason, the American and Vietnamese youths have every reason to unite and join efforts to accomplish their noble task... Unity creates strength, unity will help us win victory. Turning to Vo Thi Lien, she said in a shaken voice: "I hope we will be able to welcome you to the United States as our distinguished guest."

Heroine Ta Thi Kieu posted the American delegation about the battle of the youth and people of South Viet Nam to make the US and the Saigon administration fully implement the provisions of the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam. "The US still keeps 20,000 advisers," she said, "and the Nguyen Van Thieu administration is still detaining and torturing more than 200,000 political prisoners in South Viet Nam. That is why our fight still has to go on and can't stop."

J. Tyner, President of the Young American Workers for Liberation extended his sincere thanks to the Vietnamese friends who had helped him understand this world more correctly. "We'll win together," he concluded.

On the occasion of the 14th World Conference against A and H bombs in Tokyo

From "massive retaliation" to "practical deterrence," imperialism has not changed

THE propaganda machine of imperialism is trying its best to create an illusion about a change of its policy towards other nations. Hasn't the chief of the leading imperialist country, Mr Nixon, over and again reiterated his "good will" for a shift from the era of confrontation to the era of negotiation? It is said that today US imperialism has become more "reasonable", learned the lessons of history after World War II and made a sober appraisal of the present world balance of forces. From US diplomatic notes and policy statements it can be inferred that less stress is laid on the use of force, especially of nuclear weapons. In his essays on foreign policy, Henry Kissinger wrote that the nuclear century has destroyed traditional measures and that the paradox of the contemporary armed force lies in the fact that the monstrous growth of this force has undermined its correlation with foreign policy (1). Can one conclude from such seemingly reasonable statements that the imperialist circles have renounced the use of force in their relations with other nations?

No, this is nothing of the sort.

No doubt the present world balance of forces has definitely tipped in favour of the forces of peace and national independence at the expense of those of war and aggression. This state of things lends more credibility to imperialist shows of "good will" since everyone believes that in the present conditions only people out of their right minds will engage headlong in a big-scale war. The general correlation of forces, especially in terms of nuclear weapons, has undergone such a change that a major confrontation would be suicidal for those who dare start it. But however dramatic the change in the correlation of forces may be, it can affect only the strategies and tactics of imperialism and leaves intact its objectives and nature. This is particularly true of the US.

Since the early sixties, it has lost not only its monopoly but also its supremacy in nuclear weapons and consequently, the Kennedy administration officially had to give up its strategy of "massive retaliation" with nuclear weapons. But they were far from renouncing their sordid objectives in foreign policy. In those years, on the one hand, they kept up their arms race, including in atomic armoury, and on the other, did not flinch from "local" or "limited" wars — to use the jargon of Pentagon specialists — the type of which is the unprecedentedly atrocious aggression in Southeast Asia. In other words they were trying to avoid a nuclear confrontation with socialist powers, which would turn out to be disadvantageous to them; instead they concentrated all their war efforts against countries much weaker than theirs in terms of economic potential, population and national defence. The doings of US imperialism in the sixties did not obviously point to the slightest change in their nature; what has changed was only the means to attain predatory aims in a less dangerous and less costly manner — at least according to their subjective calculations.

Aware of this new juncture, the broad masses all over the world in the late sixties when US aggression in Indochina was stepped up to an ever greater level of atrociousness with the "escalation" policy, spearheaded their devastating action against the US in Viet Nam and Indochina, as they had previously fought against A and H bombs. It was no accident that the Japanese people and their mass organizations — including the councils against A and H bombs, were among the most militant in the worldwide drive against US aggression in Viet Nam. The annual Conference of the movement against nuclear weapons, meeting in Japan, considered the support for Viet Nam's fight against US imperialism its central task. This was dictated not only by the deep feelings of the Japanese people for the Vietnamese people, but more especially by the sound realization that the Viet Nam war had become a historic confrontation between imperialist and revolutionary forces, that the victory of the Vietnamese people — and indeed of the peoples all over the world — in this unusual contest would blunt the main thrust of imperialism and further weaken the biggest enemy of mankind.

History has proved this view to be a judicious one.

The victory of the Vietnamese people in their anti-US resistance has created unprecedentedly favourable conditions for the struggle of progressive mankind against imperialism. The balance of forces is even more advantageous to revolutionary forces after the Viet Nam war. The lesson to be drawn by the imperialists is that in our time not only "big" wars, but also "limited" aggressions, can become too dangerous for those who kindle them. The "no more Viet Nam" motto has actually guided the aggressors in their behaviour. It is indeed the starting point of the "Nixon doctrine." The oft-repeated Nixonian phrase: "from confrontation to negotiation" is to be applied only in places where the aggressors know that they will not succeed, where they deem it more profitable to compromise with one country in order to have a free hand to deal with another directly or by proxy. It should be stressed that if one of the three pillars of the "Nixon doctrine" is "the will to negotiate," such negotiations should — as admitted by the very author of the doctrine — be based upon "US strength." Militarily, it is embodied in the "practical deterrence" strategy.

We must emphasize that the change has taken place in the means only, and not in the nature of imperialism. On the agenda of the forces fighting for peace, national independence, democracy and social progress, the objective Number one remains the mobilization of world opinion against the imperialist policy of aggression and war.

VAN DUC

(1) *Henry Kissinger*, American Foreign Policy, Three Essays, *New York*, 1963, *P.* 59.

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